

WAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP
JOINT BOARD MEETING
with SECTION 32 AUTHORITY
MARCH 14, 2023, 5:30 PM

Supervisor Mandy Lake called the joint meeting of the Wakefield Township Board and Section 32 Authority Board to order with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mandy Lake, Supervisor; Denice Laessig, Treasurer; Robert Drier, Trustee; Michael Heikkila, Trustee; and Michelle Wasielewski, Deputy Clerk. ABSENT: Jennifer Ahonen, Clerk.

Section 32 Authority Members present: Paula Koruga, Dan Siirila, Bob Orlich, Joe Bonovetz, Robert Drier and Tim Moon.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion was made by Laessig, supported by Drier, to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried.

BRIEF PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA: No public comment on agenda items.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Phase 1 Wastewater Improvement Project: Other attendees of the meeting included, Tim Dean (attorney for Wakefield Township and Section 32); Jeff Wasley (chief operator for Section 32); Kelly Heidbrier (C2AE); Darren Pionk (C2AE); Doug Olson (chairman BASA); Jim Williams (LVD); John (?) (LVD); Benjamin Bartz (Snow River). Via phone was Warren Kramer (MFCI) and Steve Frank (Miller Canfield).

Kelly Heidbrier started with discussion with a brief history of the project, grant application, bond process, timeline, and the potential future of the project. The project needs to be approved at this meeting to meet the deadline requirements of the grant to receive the 50% funding of \$475,000. The bond that Wakefield Township would be backing is also for \$475,000. Total cost of \$950,000.

Attorney Tim Dean asked what the terms are for the loan and how Section 32 currently plans to pay for it. Warren Kramer stated the term of the loan is 30 years at 1.875%. The payment will be covered by the customers with a rate increase that is yet to be adopted. The ski hill is currently one-half of the use. With the upgrade, several other customers will be able to be added to the system, which would generate more revenue.

If Wakefield Township Board says no, the project stops today. The risk of not backing the bond is that the system fails. At this point Section 32 does not have the funds to be able to pay for the repairs or the credit to receive a loan, so then the State of Michigan would step in and could assess fines and the funding relief would come from the residents. If it turns into an emergency Wakefield Township could be paying 100% of the repair plus some.

Wakefield Township is in a similar relationship with GRWA. The fear is that if the ski hill defaults, then Wakefield Township is on the hook for both bonds (water and sewer). Benjamin Bartz of Snow River stated that there is a great successful history with the current owners and over \$10 million dollars being invested in upgrades to the hill this year. The future of the resort is brighter than ever.

Supervisor Lake pointed out that many of her calls are from the Thunderbird Lane residents that cannot hook up. This upgrade still doesn't allow those residents access to the system. Kelly Heidbrier indicated that this is a bare-bones project needed to get the ball rolling for future projects. Once this is complete there is an additional \$4 million of grants that can be applied for, that is already on the radar of the State of Michigan. He stated that EGLE is looking forward to the upgrade.

Trustee Heikkila asked about the timeline that was presented for completion in such a short period. Kelly Heidbrier explained that it is not a huge project but if there are delays with materials, or other issues with the contractor, construction can be pushed to 2024. There can be no delays on ordinances or resolutions, as the funding needs to be secured as soon as possible as the grant is only available this year.

Tribal Chairman, Jim Williams discussed the tribe's interest in the upgrade as they are in the first phase of the feasibility study for the future convention center/casino at the property and would need a functioning system.

Motion was made Laessig, supported by Heikkila to back the bond to be secured by Section 32 in the amount of \$475,000. ROLL CALL vote showed all those present voting YES. Motion carried.

Attorney Tim Dean stated that he will work with Steve Frank in getting everything in order.

Section 32 members, C2AE, Snow River, LVD Tribe, and BASA all thanked the Township Board.

EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT: No extended comment.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion was made by Laessig, supported by Drier, for adjournment at 6:43 p.m. Motion carried.

Jennifer Ahonen, CLERK OF WAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP

Typed by: Michelle Wasielewski, DEPUTY CLERK